SECTION 4: ADEQUATE TOOLS AND RESOURCES

4.1 ADMINISTRATIVE RESOURCES

The I/M program maintains adequate funding and the administrative resources necessary to perform all program functions including quality assurance (QA), data analysis and reporting, and enforcement. The authority for fee collection by official inspection stations is provided by LA R.S. 32:1306 (Appendix B). The statute provides that a fee of eighteen dollars be charged for each annual inspection.

The MVI Station pays seven dollars and twenty-five cents to the state for each inspection sticker. The station receives eighteen dollars for each vehicle inspection thus earning ten dollars and seventy-five cents per inspection.

The seven dollars and twenty-five cents that the state receives for each inspection sticker is divided between several different state agencies, with four dollars going to the Office of State Police for use in traffic law enforcement, one dollar and twenty-five cents to the Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV) for expenses associated with the motor vehicle inspection and financial responsibility programs, and two dollars to the Environmental Trust Fund for program implementation.

4.2 PERSONNEL/PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The program employs and trains sufficient personnel to effectively carry out the duties related to the program including, but not limited to, administrative audits, inspector audits, data analysis, program oversight, program evaluation, public education and assistance, and enforcement against stations, inspectors and motorists who are out of compliance with program regulations and requirements. Sufficient technical and professional support staff is retained through contractual arrangement to attain the objectives of the program and meet program requirements.

Motorist Assistance/Challenge Station - The Louisiana Technical College has been contracted to provide a Challenge Station for motorists to use when disputing the results of an emissions test. The station is open at least 40 hours a week and has an Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) certified or equally qualified technician on duty. The station is contracted to employ a secretary/receptionist to answer the phone and schedule appointments for vehicle

inspections. The station also provides a help desk for inspection station personnel using the OBD testing inspection systems software to provide assistance with inspection procedures as part of the vehicle inspection process.

Compliance/Enforcement Support - The DPS has been contracted to provide support for enforcement actions against stations. These actions include conducting overt and covert audits of inspection stations, and roadside audits of motorists throughout the year. The DPS collects specified program/enforcement related data for monthly submission to the LDEQ, revises the DPS regulations and training manuals as necessary, and provides/revises standard operating procedures for overt and covert audits (Appendix G) and taking enforcement actions against motorists. The DPS assists in dissemination of I/M program information to inspection stations.

Software Support- Because of the highly complex nature of the OBD inspection software, the I/M program contracts for software consulting services in the following areas:

(1) Software Development Support – The software development contractor provides a variety of technical support related to OBD test issues including, but not limited to, the following:

    (a) Performs software maintenance and updates as necessary to ensure that the Vehicle Emissions Inspection Program Software conforms to its functional specifications and is operating as per EPA regulations;

    (b) Performs root-cause analysis of any problems that are encountered to determine the cause of the problem and takes necessary corrective measures to rectify the source of the problem; and

    (c) Performs emergency repair of any system operation that does not comply with current approved system specifications. This includes system errors, i.e., "hung" or halted screens, or unexpected results within the system that render it unusable for the purpose for which it was designed.

(2) Software Testing Support – A software testing contractor provides support to the LDEQ in testing and verifying the successful resolution of the equipment deficiencies found with the OBD testing inspection system and Enterprise Vehicle Information System (EVIS) database software.

    (a) OBD Data Analysis – The contractor provides a variety of OBD data

analysis-related support, which could include the following elements:

    (1) Tracking and providing summary OBD statistical results from other established programs in a common, easy-to-understand format to serve as a benchmark against which to compare the performance of the Louisiana program;

    (2) Assisting the LDEQ in continued development of a "triggers" analysis system to identify potential problem stations and inspectors through post-inspection analysis of test data. The contractor develops and tests pilot triggers and assists the LDEQ in interpreting the trigger results in order to maximize their effectiveness in identifying and eliminating problem(s) in testing; and

    (3) Assisting the LDEQ in additional analysis of the OBD test results. The specifics of this support depends on the analysis and reporting capabilities of EVIS. Possible areas of support include trend analysis and development of annual data reports to the EPA required by federal regulations.

(b) General OBD Support – Under this task, the contractor provides additional assistance related to other OBD-related technical or programmatic issues. Examples of possible assistance are following:

    (1) Assisting in the design of OBD-related public awareness plans and the development of related media materials. These materials may include brochures addressing various aspects of the program;

    (2) Providing assistance on an as-requested basis in any discussions or negotiations with the EPA related to the inspection program;

    (3) Alerting the LDEQ to any evolving OBD issues in other regions of the country or at the national level, so that the LDEQ can prepare for and address such issues before they become concerns or crises in Louisiana. This includes the impending need to implement test capability to communicate with vehicles that use the newest/latest communication protocol(s); and

(4) Providing support in meeting federal I/M requirements. This includes such items as assisting with federally required equipment and station audits, annual data reports, and biennial program evaluations.

(3) <u>Troubleshooting Support</u> – Because there is a turnover in the inspection station business, and in order to provide additional support to inspection stations, the I/M program contracts with a vendor to perform troubleshooting support. This support includes:

  (a) on-site activations;

  (b) on-site troubleshooting support services; and

  (c) establishment and operation of a help center to provide troubleshooting support for the I/M program.

4.3 EQUIPMENT

The program possesses equipment necessary to achieve the objectives of the program and meet program requirements including, but not limited to, a supply of vehicles for covert auditing through DPS, test equipment and facilities for program evaluation, and computers capable of data processing, analysis, and reporting. A detailed budget plan and description of personnel resources is contained in Appendix H.